

The leaf burn problem is a water stress problem, which manifests itself during the high light/high temperature periods of the year, so consider **all** situations that can contribute to water stress.

1. Root balls should be warmed up before the plants go to the forcing area. One suggestion for accomplishing this is to remove dormant plants from the cooler during the **night before** forcing begins (not during the heat of late afternoon). Water thoroughly and place the plants in a shaded service area at prevailing air temperatures. If using Ready-to-Force plants, allow a similar amount of time after coming off the delivery truck.
2. Light intensity: Maintain a maximum of 3,500 to 4,000 footcandles. Above this level petal burn can result, particularly on darker colored varieties. A minimum of 2,500 footcandles is desirable. Levels below this are not uncommon during Northern winters, so keep in mind it will increase forcing time and uneven flowering, and allow for it on your forcing schedule.
3. Warming root balls and maintaining light levels at 3,000 footcandles or lower for the first 2 to 4 days will reduce the incidence of leaf burn. Misting the plants during the heat of the day for the first 2 to 4 days will provide an even greater reduction. Misting needs will vary from forcing area to forcing area, therefore, if you opt to add mist to the process, the objective is to keep a thin layer of water on the foliage during the heat of the day which will prevent moisture stress and reduce burn. Misting intensity should be more frequent at the start of the mist period and more delayed toward the end of the mist period; i.e. 2 days frequent mist and 2 days delayed mist. We do not recommend misting beyond 4 days as this will invite the incidence of foliar diseases.
4. For those who do not have mist available in their forcing area, a simple way to keep foliage moist, as well as reducing light intensity the first few days, is to put a layer of cheezecloth or tobacco cloth right on top of the plants. It is far easier to keep it moist during the day than the foliage of uncovered plants.
5. Certainly it should be considered a given that inadequate irrigation during cooling and during forcing, or the other extreme of over watering to the point that root hairs are killed, will definitely contribute to water stress. Keep in mind that our media, Coir, does not require as much irrigation as peat moss.